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# Jesus' Measure of a Christian

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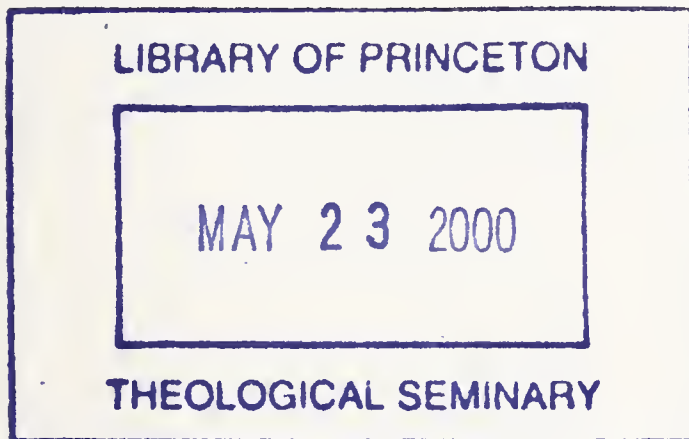
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Jesus' measure of a  
Christian

*W. Smith*

# Jesus' Measure of a Christian

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## FOREWORD

Two students sit together in school—one is a Christian, one is not. What is the difference? Two men work in the same office. One is a Christian, one is not. What is the difference in their value to society?

Does being a Christian mean membership in an organization, the intellectual acceptance of certain teachings, the carrying out of some certain kind of daily program? Is it a form of worship or a spiritual inner experience, or is it all or none of these?

If men are to test fairly the reality of their Christian lives, or if we are to decide wisely whether or not Christianity is the solution of individual, social and world problems, this question—What is a Christian?—must first be clearly answered.

Naturally the Founder of the Religion is the one best fitted to state its implications. These lessons aim to help a student discover what Jesus meant by a Christian.





## GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

1. These lessons are divided into sections so that a busy student can, each morning, get one important truth of the lesson.


2. The lessons will be useful and interesting only as the student writes out his own solution of the problems stated. Keep a special note book for this purpose.

3. Give at least fifteen minutes each morning and an hour at the end of the week to the lesson. The subject is worthy of thorough study and will not be profitable with hurried, superficial thinking.

4. It is with purpose that practically no comments are made on the subject under discussion. The plan of the course is to send the student to a study of the experience of men and to the Bible for the answer to the question of the implications of the Christian life. Unless the student is willing to think independently and to work thoroughly, this course will not be useful.

5. In some lessons more questions are asked than a busy student will have time to answer. They do not pretend to completely cover the subject and are not necessarily sequential. Some of the questions can be omitted if necessary without confusing the argument. Certain questions will require little thought, and some much thought, the time required ranging with the experience of the student.

6. Faithfully attempt to render the service suggested at the end of each lesson. The final test of the lesson is life rather than logical conclusions.



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## LESSON I.

### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Among Christians there are some who are selfish, some who are irritable and hard to live with, some who are dishonest and unfair in social relationships. Among non-Christians there are many charming personalities, unselfish folk who live for others and play life's game squarely. Being a Christian does not seem always to produce any certain type of character easily distinguishable from non-Christians. Should a Christian be easily recognizable and if so what are the marks? If you wished to separate an audience into Christians and non-Christians on the basis of their characters, what tests would you apply?

Read Matt. 5:1-12.

#### First Day

Write out the eight things which Jesus said make a man happy.

Which two or three of these qualities do you rank as most important in a Christian life?

Why?

#### Second Day

Classify these eight sources of blessedness under the headings—inner life, relation to God, relation to others.

What did Jesus seem to teach here was the relation between these three realms of life—personal, social, spiritual?

Make a list of your acquaintances who illustrate what Jesus taught makes folks happy.

How many of these beatitudes do you suppose Jesus learned out of his own experiences?

### Third Day

Read Matt. 5:13-16.

How can a Christian live so that you could accurately say that he is like salt or light?

Make a list of some changes which would come in your community if all Christians were aggressively like salt and light.

Exactly what changes would come in an average school if every Christian in it were a purifying influence?

### Fourth Day

Read Matt. 5:27-30.

If I decide to steal something but am prevented from doing it, am I a thief?

If I hate a man but never speak evil of him or injure him in any way, what harm is it?

Exactly what did Jesus mean to teach here?

### Fifth Day

Read John 15:12, 17, Matt. 5:43-46 and Luke 10:25-28.

Why is a loving disposition often supposed to lack in manly virility?

Does a man with a loving temperament ever make a good fighter?

What is the difference between sentimentalism and love? Illustrate.

Who is the most lovable person you know?

Why is he or she lovable?

### Sixth Day

Read through Matthew, Chapters 6 and 7 for additional evidence on what the characteristics of a Christian should be?

Does your answer require richness and growth in personal character and in social and spiritual relationship?

## Seventh Day

Read II Corinthians 3:18.

If a Christian is one whose life is becoming like the life of Jesus, what should his chief characteristics be?

According to this definition, who is the truest Christian you know?

Talk with some good friend who is not a Christian. Discover the chief reason why he is not a Christian and report to the class what you discover.

Read "The Changed Life," by Henry Drummond.

### PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What would you rank as the first three qualities of a Christian character?
2. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions of section seven of this lesson.
3. In what way do you think the character of the average Christian most needs to be changed to become like the character of Jesus?
4. What change, if any, has this lesson made in your idea of what should be the chief characteristics of a Christian?
5. Whom would you rank among your friends as coming nearest to having a perfect Christian character? Why?

## LESSON II.

### LIFE PROGRAM

In our block there live forty-two families. Twenty-eight of them are Christian families; fourteen are non-Christian. All of them work busily six days of the week, the women chiefly at home, the men chiefly in business. Most of them, both Christians and non-Christians, are very busy also on Sunday, especially the women. Practically all of the life energy of all of our neighbors, Christians and non-Christians, is spent in a steady, absorbing routine of the day's work. Should there be a difference in the way Christians and non-Christians spend their time and energy; if so, what should the difference be?

Study the incident in Luke 12:13-33.

#### First Day

Just what does it mean to "seek first the Kingdom of God"?

Are you sure of your answer?

What is your definition of the "Kingdom of God"?

For the next week keep a record of incidents and events which you see which would not have occurred if the Kingdom of God were fully come in your community.

#### Second Day

Was there anything wrong with the request of this man in the crowd? If you were assured you could have your next prayer answered what would it be?

Is it the church's duty to work for a fair distribution of property and profits?

Did Jesus mean that He had no responsibility for the "affairs of men"?

How many of the people in your community are spending their time for material things?

### Third Day

What was wrong with the plans of the rich farmer in the parable that Jesus gave?

What, if anything, is wrong about a Christian storing up much wealth?

Under what conditions is it right for a Christian to be worth a million dollars?

Can a man be as selfish with a hundred dollars as with a million? Are you sure?

If you had a million dollars what would you do with it?

### Fourth Day

Just exactly what change did Jesus want to make in His disciples when He urged them to put "life" above "things"?

What did He mean by "life"?

A fine Christian business man urged the boys in a Hi Y club to go into business because they might "make a fortune." What was wrong with the proposition?

Read Matthew 20:25-28.

### Fifth Day

Read Matthew 10:37-39.

In the incident studied thus far this week, Jesus urged His followers to put "life" above everything. Now He says men must lose "life" to save it. Explain the seeming contradiction.

Who is the best illustration you know of this principle of saving life by losing it?

### Sixth Day

Read Luke 9:57-62.

Since Christianity has produced the best homes on earth and the truest devotion to all family relations, what did Jesus mean by these seemingly unfilial commands.

## Seventh Day

Most Christians spend much of their time working to build and support a good home, with education, play and social life. Is this "spreading abroad the Kingdom of God"?

Should a Christian business or professional man be called to his life work the same as a minister?

Talk with some Christian friend who is not putting the Kingdom first in his life program, discover what is first, help him make the needed change if you can and report results to the group.

### PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Exactly what changes would come in your community if all Christians arranged their life program according to the teachings of this lesson?

2. Compare with other members of the group your answer to the questions in section one.

3. What change, if any, has this lesson made in your idea of what should absorb most of the life of any Christian?

4. State the arguments for and against the position of the man who said, "My business is to extend the Kingdom of God. I cobble shoes to pay expenses."

Under what conditions could pegging shoes be a sacred task, part of the Kingdom, and under what conditions could preaching be a secular task?

5. Is a Christian business man justified in spending more time and money on himself and his home than is a Christian preacher? Why?

Should a preacher own a \$50,000 residence?



## LESSON III.

### CONQUERING SIN

Sin is the great democratizer. Here we are all in one class; Culture, wealth, education in one family; poverty and ignorance in the other, but the first family produced a devil and the last family, a saint.

And sin threatens all of life. An honored and trusted bank cashier works overtime for thirty years, serving the people, but yields to sin and ends his life deservedly in the penitentiary. A mind that was meant to solve some of the problems of humanity, plays with sin and becomes a pollution among the boys of the community. The record says that Jesus came not to complete the philosophies of men, reform society, nor build effective nations, but simply to save His people from their *sin*. Here we seem to face straight into life's real struggle. Can a man by being a Christian meet and master this monster? And if so, how?

#### First Day

Read John 1:29 and Matthew 1:21.

What does this record give as the mission of Christ to men?

Have you thought of victory over sin as being of such supreme value as to spend Christ's life to secure it?

Read Hebrews 12:4.

#### Second Day

Read Matthew 5:29-30.

Did Jesus mean this teaching literally?

If not, what did He mean?

What should a Christian do when he hears someone begin to tell a vulgar story?

### Third Day

Read Matthew 4:1-11.

How did Jesus win His complete victory over temptation?

Is the same road to victory open to us?

What do you think is the most common sin in your community?

### Fourth Day

Read Hebrews 2:18, 4:15 and 5:8, 9.

What relation does this writer say Jesus has to our fight for victory?

How can Jesus help us now to conquer sin?

Find one way in Luke 22:40-41, and Hebrews 7:25.

Make a list of times and ways in which you remember Jesus helped you to conquer sin?

### Fifth Day

Read Matthew 25:41-46.

What sin had these men committed which brought on them such fierce judgment from Christ?

What would happen if there should come into a modern Church social event a known harlot and also a man who had failed to help the needy in the community?

“To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

### Sixth Day

Read John 3:16 and 3:36, 16:9.

What is the sin of unbelief which seems to be so final in its results?

Is it a sin to doubt the commonly accepted beliefs of the church?

Revise this definition of "belief" as Jesus used the word: "Belief is the consecration of your whole personality to the service of God through the service of men." Compare Luke 10:26-27.

## Seventh Day

Read Luke 15:1-32.

Reduce to one paragraph the teaching of this chapter on the Problem of Victory over Sin.

What is the chief cause why young men in your community go astray?

Resolve that this next week shall be one of special victory over your worst temptation and fight for a record week.

Read "A Rational Fight for Character," by H. C. King.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the most troublesome temptations of Christians?

2. Who is the most victorious Christian you know and what do you believe to be the secret of his success.

3. A man asked Moody, "Are you having victory in your soul?" Do you approve Moody's answer when he said, "I don't know, I'm too busy getting folks saved to think about it."?

4. In a list of things to be done next week by a busy Christian man, where would you rank the fight for victory over sin?

5. What new light, if any, has this week's study brought you on the path to a very victorious life?

## LESSON IV.

### PRAYING

If prayer works, it is unmeasurable in its power. If a Christian can pray and thereby affect the amount of God's power directed at any one point in life, then he ought to be grandly victorious in his own life, and irresistibly useful in the community. If prayer works, then a wise Christian would systematically and scientifically spend the best part of every day using it as a method of work. If prayer works, then "saying your prayers" at night just before you go entirely to sleep as the chief use of prayer is a farce and travesty on prayer. Can a Christian cooperate with God directly in the days work by prayer? If so, how?

#### First Day

Read Mark 1:35-36; Luke 6:12, 13; 9:18; 22:39-42 and John 17:9 and 20.

Write out from each passage one significant fact about Jesus' practice of prayer.

What do you think were the chief things for which Jesus prayed?

What is the prayer most often offered by Christians?

#### Second Day

Read Luke 11:1-4.

What do you learn about Jesus' practice of prayer from, "He was praying at a certain place and when He stopped"?

Jesus evidently left on His followers the impression of being an expert in prayer.

Lay your plans now to make a thorough study of Jesus' prayer life.

### Third Day

Read Matthew 6:9-13.

“When you pray say Our Father.”

Write out what it means in the science of prayer that God is our loving Almighty *Father*.

What is the chief difference between a boy's relation to his father and to some other very valued friend?

What effect does it have on the relation between you and your father when he shares with you something which you need?

What is gained in relation between a father and son when the father sometimes waits to be asked before he gives his son what he needs?

### Fourth Day

“Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven”.

Apply this principle of our relation to God depending upon our relation to others to all of the petitions in this prayer.

For instance, if you asked for food, what does that imply as to your relation to those in need around you or in Poland or China?

What is wrong when a man asks mercy of God while he is critically judging his neighbors?

Could a man pray, “Thy Kingdom come on earth” if he is storing up wealth or spending money selfishly on wasteful luxuries?

### Fifth Day

Read John 14:13-15.

What does it mean to pray “in Jesus name”?

Was Jesus teaching the same truth in John 15:7?

If "in His name" means "in His Spirit" what would most of our prayers be for?

Is the value of our prayers measured by the Christ-likeness of our daily lives?

Next time you hear a public prayer imagine that Jesus is offering the prayer and see what impression you get.

## Sixth Day

The subject of prayer is worthy of a life-long study.

Plan to go through the Bible soon and study thoroughly all the teachings on prayer.

Meantime write down more of the teachings of Jesus on the subject from John 9:31, 15:16, 17:1-26, Matthew 18:19-22, Luke 11:5-13, 22:32.

Is it right for a student or a team to pray for victory in a game?

## Seventh Day

Would you agree to the proposition that prayer is a practical method of bringing superhuman power to bear on human tasks?

What is the cause of your own failure to use prayer to its full capacity?

What is the best instance you know of answered prayer?

Write out some things which you believe you should pray for in connection with your friends and pray regularly until an answer comes.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the questions about prayer which most trouble men and what is your answer to these questions?
2. What are the conditions of effective praying?
3. A very earnest Christian wholesale grocer saw the price of sugar drop to where it meant financial ruin for him. Would it have been right for him to pray that the price of sugar hold steady until he sold his stock at cost? Why?
4. What change, if any, has this week's study made in your understanding of prayer or of your plans for its use?
5. What two or three problems which the Church faces in your community do you think come within the zone of problems which can be solved by prayer?

## LESSON V.

### THE CHURCH

The Church has been and is the greatest force on earth, superior in value to any organization, movement or nation. And it is steadily increasing in its power in the world. And yet, the Church's best friends believe it has inherent powers far beyond those now being used and that if the Church should function in some full measure up to its normal power, it could really redeem the world. What change in program, what new appropriation of available spiritual power, what improved leadership, what better conceptions of the Christian's relation to the Church, would make the Church in reality the power it is meant to be?

#### First Day

Read Matthew 28:19-20.

What are the chief reasons why a Christian should unite with the Church and work in it?

Are they the same reasons as require a soldier to join the army of his country in time of war instead of fighting alone?

Can a man be a worthy citizen and true patriot outside of the Church?

#### Second Day

Read Matthew 10:32-33.

What is the primary purpose of Church attendance?

What is the difference between a Christian's relation to the Church and to any other organization such as a fraternal order?

What is the chief reason why men do not join the Church?



### Third Day

Read Eph. 5:23-32.

Write out five or six things which Paul here says about Christ's relation to the Church.

Christ loves the Church as "His own holy bride."

A Christian is a man who is becoming like Christ.

What would be two or three of the chief evidences that a man devotedly loves the Church?

Who among your acquaintances loves the Church most?  
Why?

### Fourth Day

Read I Cor. 11:23-26.

The observance of this sacrament in memory of Christ's life and death has been of inestimable value to Christians for two thousand years.

Why should Jesus provide especially that Christians should never forget "His broken body and shed blood"?

Why is it appropriate for a Church building to have a cross on it?

Can you think of a more appropriate symbol?

To what degree is this an accurate definition: "The Church consists of those who are living sacrificial lives after the pattern of Jesus Christ"?

### Fifth Day

What are the advantages and disadvantages of denominations in the Church?

What is the test of which is the best denomination for any man?

Is there any best denomination for everybody?

## Sixth Day

What are the two or three chief improvements which you would like to see made in your Church?

What are the things in a Church's program which make it most attractive to men?

Why does it sometimes seem to be more attractive to women than to men?

What does a Christian have a right to expect from his Church?

What does the Church have a right to expect from every Christian?

## Seventh Day

Make an estimate of how your Church divides its energy between these tasks:

- (a) Leading non-Christians into the Christian life.
- (b) Developing the life of its Christian members.
- (c) Making the Community a Christian community.

Are you satisfied with the proportion?

If not, how would you change it?

Why?

Go to your pastor and ask him what additional service you can render your Church and then enlist at least one of your friends to share that service with you.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions under section 7.
2. Why is the average Church more attractive to adults than to young folks?

What changes could be made in the average Church to make it more attractive to young folks?

3. What are the chief qualities of a successful minister?  
Who is the most helpful minister you ever knew?

Why?

4. Is the Church the best agency through which a Christian can meet his responsibilities to the community?

Why?

5. What would you say to a man who says he can worship God on a golf course or driving over the hills as well as he can in Church?

## LESSON VI.

### WORKING WITH OTHERS

Life's problems are mostly problems of relationships; wars, strikes, divorce, problems of the nation, of business, of social pleasure, of the home; if folks could work together in effective harmony, most of life's problems would be solved. Does Christianity have a solution for these problems? Is a real Christian more adjustable and more charming because he is a Christian? Would a Christian world be a warless world free from strife of any kind? If Christianity has this power, how can we bring it to bear on this divided unloving human race?

#### First Day

Read Matthew 6:12-15, 18:21-35.

Apply this principle to any problems or relationships which you may have—that you treat others as you wish God to treat you—and see what happens.

Would such a practice eliminate all criticism of others, suspicion, jealousy, evil speaking, race antipathy and international strife?

~~If there is some one whom you do not like try it on him.~~

Keep a record this week of the experiences with others which tend to make you angry and study out why these experiences thus affect you.

#### Second Day

Read Luke 2:51, Matthew 19:19, Eph. 6:1-10, John 19:26, 27.

Write out the teaching as to how a Christian should live in his home.

Why are some Christians more courteous and agreeable away from home than at home?

If one of Jesus' last thoughts, in agony of death, was for the comfort of His mother, what do you suppose was their relation in daily life at home?

What are the chief causes of strife between parents and children?

What is the cure?

### Third Day

Read Matthew 6:9 and 23:8, 9.

Why do members of a good family work together better than an average office staff?

Just what practical changes would it make in the group with whom you work, if you should all come to think of each other as brothers in the same family?

### Fourth Day

Read Matthew 7:1-5 and 7:12.

What is the difference between estimating a person and judging him?

Would habitual obedience to the teachings of Jesus here overcome all causes of strife?

What more is needed in a good team of workers or players than to avoid division or strife?

How do you get it?

### Fifth Day

Read I Cor. Chapt. 13.

Whom have you found it most difficult to live and work with harmoniously?

Why?

Do you find any definite solution in this chapter for the problem of living harmoniously with this person?

### Sixth Day

Read Matthew 5:21-24.

What is the relation between harmony with men and harmony with God?

Before you write your answer to this question read I John 1:6-7, 2:9-11, 3:14-17, 23, 24.

Why cannot a gossip pray effectively?

### Seventh Day

Read Matthew 5:39-48.

Under what conditions can you live and work harmoniously with persons whom you dislike?

Can you love a person whom you dislike?

Have you done it?

What is the modern meaning of "the other cheek" and "the second mile"?

Find two men or a group of men who should be friends but are unfriendly, and bring about a real friendly peace among them.

Read "The Greatest Thing in the World," by Henry Drummond. And "The Second Mile," by Fosdick.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the most common causes of division and strife in any group?

What is the remedy?

2. A staff of Association secretaries was broken up because each of three secretaries on the staff insisted that his department was not getting its share of appropriations.

What was wrong with the controversy?

3. If you do not believe in non-resistance how do you interpret Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:39-48?

4. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions of section seven of this lesson.

5. If you have ever been in or seen a heated controversy, what caused it and how could it have been avoided?

## LESSON VII.

### WINNING OTHERS

Whether or not Christianity can bring its saving energy into all life everywhere depends, of course, upon its expansive power. Is it infectious? If one man has it, should his neighbour get it from him? Certainly real Christianity is exceedingly convincing and attractive and does naturally spread. Few Christians are aggressively and scientifically busy leading others to become Christians. Should they be winners of men, and if so, what is the secret of doing it very successfully?

#### First Day

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

These were Jesus' last instructions to His followers.

Is it reasonable to suppose that He here told them the things He was most anxious Christians should do?

How far do these three commands to His followers apply to us ordinary men?

#### Second Day

Read Mark 1:16-20.

Jesus evidently expected some men to leave their business and give all their time to winning men to the Christian life.

How shall a man decide whether he is or is not called to give his life to professional Christian work?

#### Third Day

Suppose Simon had gone on with Jesus but Jesus and Andrew had agreed that Andrew should continue the fishing business: What would have been the difference between



the two brothers in their responsibility for winning other men to the Christian life?

What does it reveal about a man if he makes no effort to win others to his political party, his organization or his college?

### **Fourth Day**

Read John 4:1-26.

Make a list of the excuses Jesus might have given for not trying to win this woman?

What excuse do you usually use?

What induced Jesus to talk with the woman in spite of serious handicaps?

### **Fifth Day**

What are some of the qualities which a man should have in order to be a successful "fisher of men"?

Look through John 4:1-26 again for evidence on this point.

Why do you suppose Jesus chose fishermen to help Him win men?

Why did He not rather choose priests and scholars?

Whom have you known that was a successful winner of men in spite of handicaps?

### **Sixth Day**

Look through Mark 1:16-45 and make a list of the places where Jesus did His work.

Is it fair to assume that every effort of His, wherever He was, was to make good Christians out of men?

What advantages does a business or professional man have over a preacher in winning men to the Christian life?

## Seventh Day

The process of becoming a Christian and growing into a full stature as a Christian is a process with many steps in it. Winning others involves helping them make all the steps. Probably the most difficult step is the first decision to be an out and out Christian.

Why is this true?

What are the causes of success and failure in bringing non-Christian men to this great decision?

Talk with at least one of your friends about definitely deciding to be an out and out Christian and pray and work for a decision.

Read "Individual Work for Individuals," by Trumbull.

### PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the qualities necessary if a Christian is to be a successful "fisher of men"?
2. Why does the average Christian find it difficult to talk with other men about becoming a Christian?
3. Is a Christian lawyer or teacher as responsible for winning men as is the Christian preacher? Why?
4. What changes, if any, has this lesson made in your idea of a Christian's responsibility in winning others to the Christian life?
5. Who is the most successful Christian you know in bringing others to decision for the Christian life? What is the explanation of his success?

## LESSON VIII.

### MEETING SOCIAL NEED

The Challenge of this generation to Christianity is that it should solve our social and industrial problems. The world is satisfied with Christ. It is not much interested in our dogma or form of ecclesiastical organization, but it very much wants a solution for some serious social and international problems, and it has an idea that Christianity was meant to solve these problems. Being a Christian has consisted very often in a mystical experience or in acceptance of certain dogmas without any practical relations to the way men live in the community. The world is calling upon Christianity to function in daily life, solving the problems of industry, race, and nations. What change will be necessary in the average Christian before this is done?

Read Luke 10:25-27.

#### First Day

What answer would an average Christian teacher have given to the question of this young lawyer?

Assuming that the Priest was religious and the Levite was moral, what was wrong with the Priest's religion and the Levite's morals?

Can a man be a Christian manufacturer and get rich on cheap labor?

Can a workman be a Christian and earn less than his wages?

How many of the poor families of your acquaintance are poor as a result of an un-Christian distribution of wealth and how many because of their own fault and failures?

## Second Day

Although the Priest did not help the man physically, if he prayed for him, was not that his better part in serving the man?

Jesus did not say that the Good Samaritan rendered the man any spiritual service. Would the parable be improved if Jesus had said that the Samaritan arranged for the Priest to return to the inn to talk with the wounded man about his soul?

## Third Day

Jesus defined my neighbor as a man in need whose need I am able to meet and He said a man has spiritual life—that is, he is a Christian if he loves God with his entire life and meets the need of his needy neighbors.

What is the relation between spiritual worship and social service?

Was the Good Samaritan rendering spiritual help when he took physical care of the wounded man? Are you sure?

## Fourth Day

Perhaps the Priest and the Levite hurried on to Jericho to start a movement for good government so there would be no more robberies on the road.

If they did, was not that better service than the service of the Good Samaritan?

Was the bad government and the consequent ineffective police system within the list of responsibilities of the Priest?

If the Priest had secured the real conversion of the grafting official responsible for the Jericho road, would that have stopped the robberies?

Under what conditions should a preacher be candidate for office in his city?

### **Fifth Day**

What did the Priest lack as an effective personal worker hoping to win the wounded man to Christ?

As far as the story goes, did the Samaritan meet his full responsibility to the wounded man?

What effect would it have on you if you were in a city mission with no place to sleep, if a prominent churchman drove up to the mission in his limousine, threw off his fur coat and urged you to become a Christian?

### **Sixth Day**

Read Matthew 25:31-40.

What did Jesus mean by saying that service rendered to needy people is service to Him?

Under what conditions does service to others develop a man's own religious life?

What is the relation between love of God and love of man?

Does each always cause the other?

Did you ever know a Christian who enjoyed being with sinners and outcasts?

### **Seventh Day**

What evidence do you get from the life and ministry of Jesus while on earth as to the possibility of combining a spiritual individualistic gospel with a social program?

Glance through the first three chapters of Mark's gospel for evidence on this point.

A prominent citizen made the charge against a Western College that a boy could not spend four years in that college and retain his respect for a millionaire father. If this charge was well founded what was wrong with the college?

Enlist one or two of your friends to join with you in some needy service in the community.

### PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What basic new relation does a man bear to his community when he becomes a Christian?

2. Two very earnest Christians had a heated argument on the question, "Is it the Church's chief business to save sinners or to save society?" What was wrong with that argument.

3. What is the chief unsolved social problem in your community which can be best solved by the power of Christianity?

4. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions in section six of this lesson.

5. If a Christian banker with an income of \$10,000 a year has a non-Christian chauffeur with an income of \$1,000 a year and both have five children, what shall the banker and his wife do for the chauffeur and his family?

## LESSON IX.

### MEETING SOCIAL NEED (Continued)

The drive of Christianity has slowed down while men debate whether our religion is a social or an individual religion. As a matter of history it has been mostly individual. Many earnest folk are alarmed at the present trend toward social Christianity lest this trend weaken the spiritual vitality of Christians and of the Church. Does or can a social religious program deepen and enrich spiritual life? Are social and individual religions opposite or separate, or are they parts of the same experience? How far shall the Church enter aggressively into the solution of social problems?

#### First Day

Read Matthew 25:31-40.

What is the Church in your community doing to increase the income of the poor, improve health conditions and reduce crime?

#### Second Day

Make a list of five needy or unfortunate "neighbors" of yours.

What is their attitude toward the Church?

Why?

What is the Church's attitude toward them?

Why?

What is the Church's program for them?

How would you improve this program?

### Third Day

What is the chance of saving these "neighbors" spiritually in their present economic and social condition?

What would be the effect on the Church if it could end poverty, strikes and unsocial living conditions?

What will be the effect on the Church if it does not do these things?

Are the laboring classes in your community as a group in the Church in as large proportion as other groups?

Why?

### Fourth Day

Read John 21:15-17.

What is the evidence that a man is telling the truth when he sings, "My Jesus I love thee"?

Where is the best place in your community to love God?

Do you believe in the "Social Program of the Federal Council of Churches"?

### Fifth Day

Read Matthew 9:10-13.

Would the sinners and outcasts of your community enjoy a dinner in your home?

Would you enjoy having them?

Would they enjoy attending your Church?

Would they find in your Church the solution of the most urgent problems of their lives?

### Sixth Day

Read Luke 6:31-36.

Make a list of the leaders in your Church.

Then write out some of the things that would happen in your community if they should all live by the Golden Rule.



What reasons did Jesus give for living especially for our unattractive neighbors, even for our enemies?

## Seventh Day

Read Acts 1:8.

What do you mean by "being witnesses"?

Who among your friends has been the best evidence of the reality of Christ and His power?

How did he do it?

How would it affect the Evangelistic results of your church if it should put on a vigorous program to accomplish these things in the community?:

1. Bring about such a distribution of wealth that all children would have an adequate opportunity for education, leisure, and play.

2. Bring about peace and cooperation between social, industrial, and racial groups.

3. Lead all Christians to live their daily lives in the community according to the teaching and spirit of Jesus Christ.

Talk with your pastor or some leader in the church about enlisting your friends in some service in the community for the church.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What should be the chief items of your Church's program in the community?

2. Should a Church forum or Bible Class discuss a political election?

3. Should the Church promote a recreational program in your community? What should be some of its chief items?

Should any of its recreational program be held on Sunday?

4. What changes, if any, have the last two lessons made in your idea of the responsibility of a Christian and of the Church in your community?

5. What is the chief problem to be solved before your church will carry out an adequate social program?

## LESSON X.

### BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

A sophomore in college held the genuine respect of every one who knew him. He was a gentleman and always had been strictly honest in his work, a charming sport on the athletic field. He was a modest leader in many lines of service in college and expected to go out into life to be of his maximum use to the world, but he wasn't a Christian. One evening, talking with a friend, he decided to become a Christian and did so. What actually happened? No important change was made in his character or life program, but that night he was a Christian and at noon he wasn't. What made him a Christian?

Study the incident in Matthew 19:16-30.

#### First Day

Could a man be a Christian and disobey any of these commands which Jesus gave?

If he obeyed them all would he be a Christian?

Could a person be selfish, mean, and dishonest and yet be a Christian?

#### Second Day

What do you think was the purpose of Jesus' command to the young man that he distribute all his possessions to the poor?

Was it for the sake of the man or for the sake of the poor?

Did he mean that a Christian should not own property?

#### Third Day

Exactly what change did Jesus want to make in the man's life when he said "Then come and follow Me"?

Under what conditions can a man follow Jesus and yet work all day in an office or school?

Under what conditions could a man give all of his possessions to the poor and all of his time to good works and yet not follow Jesus?

Who among your friends is, in your judgment, most truly following Jesus?

Write out what it means to you to "follow Jesus"?

### Fourth Day

What are the two or three most common ideas as to what a man must do to become a Christian?

How do these differ from the conditions which Jesus laid down for this young man?

For instance, if a fine moral young man went to a minister and said that he wanted to become a Christian what would the minister probably tell him to do?

### Fifth Day

Why would obedience to these two commands, "to give his possessions to the poor and to follow Jesus," make the man a Christian while obedience to the other six commands did not make the man a Christian?

What would obedience to these two commands accomplish which obedience to the other six commands failed to accomplish?

Why will a person live eternally who gives his possessions to the poor and follows Jesus?

Was Jesus teaching the same truth in Luke 10:25-28?

### Sixth Day

Why was it hard for the man to follow Jesus?

Why is it any harder for a rich man to become a Christian than a poor man?

Under what conditions would a rich man find it easier to become a Christian than a poor man would?

## Seventh Day

Read again Matthew 19:27-30.

Does this answer of Jesus to Peter throw any light on what Jesus meant by following Him?

What do you think He meant by the expression "for my name's sake"?

What do you mean when you say you do something for another's sake?

Think of some fine young man whom you know is not a Christian.

What does he need to do to become a Christian?

Talk with some good friend who is not a Christian and discover the chief reason why he is not a Christian.

Read "What it Means to be a Christian," by Bosworth.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What actually happens when a man becomes a Christian? If you should say that your friend became a Christian today, just what do you mean? How is he different from what he was yesterday?

2. What change, if any, has this week's study made in your own idea of just what happens when a man becomes a Christian?

3. Exactly what changes would come in your community if every man who becomes a Christian would understand and follow the teachings of this lesson?

4. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the question in section three of this week's lesson.

5. Revise this statement to agree with your own beliefs, "A man becomes a Christian when he chooses to devote his life to unselfish service for his fellowmen because of his love for and loyalty to Christ."

Read "In His Steps," by Charles M. Sheldon.

## LESSON XI.

### TWICE BORN MEN

Conversion is not as definite and prominent a factor in religion as it was formerly. Religion shows a tendency to be more scientific and more social. Is it also increasing in reality of religious experience and spiritual power? While this scientific age is less interested in certain emotional experience once prominent in connection with the beginnings of the Christian life, is it less interested in the reality of the spiritual experience of men? Is our religion primarily a steady and growing experience with God, the beginning of which might well be called a new birth?

#### First Day

Read John 3:1-8.

Here Jesus described the beginning of the Christian's new relation to God.

What change could come in a man's life which you would be willing to describe as a new birth?

Thousands of reliable men have had a spiritual experience which has so changed their lives that they are quite willing to describe it as Jesus did as "being born again." The important thing is to "have" this experience even if you cannot fully understand it.

#### Second Day

Read again John 3:1-8.

Just what do you suppose Jesus considered Nicodemus as lacking in his preparation for the Kingdom?

Was it faulty philosophy or theology? That is if Nicodemus had come fully to a correct belief in Jesus as the Messiah, would Jesus have considered that Nicodemus was then "born again."

### Third Day

Read again John 3:1-8.

Do you get any light on what experience Jesus thought Nicodemus needed from His expressions "Born from above," "Born of the spirit," "Born of water and the spirit"?

Is being "born of the spirit" the same as being converted?

Many reliable men have had a very definite experience which they have called a conversion.

What do you think actually happens when men are converted?

Is it an act of the man or of God or of both?

If of both man and God what does each do?

### Fourth Day

Compare this teaching of Jesus with what he taught the young lawyer in Luke 18:18-25.

Was Jesus asking these two men to have the same experience?

Is being "born of the spirit" the same as deciding to "Follow Jesus"?

Or does being born of the spirit follow as a result of deciding to "Follow Jesus"?



## **Fifth Day**

Read John 1:12-13.

Does this passage throw any new light on what Jesus meant by "being born again"?

Exactly what is meant by "accepting" or "receiving" Christ?

Is it the same as "following Jesus"?

Study I John 2:29-3:4 for additional evidence on what it means to be "born again," and how it is brought about?

Are Christians sons of God any more than non-Christians?

## **Sixth Day**

Read John 14:20-23.

What experiences have you had or do you know of others having which correspond to these expressions of Jesus, "The Holy Spirit remains with you and will be within you"; "You are in Me and I am in you"; "I will appear to them"; "My Father and I will live in him"?

If a man had such experiences as these steadily in his daily life as a result of following Jesus would the beginning of such an experience be called a spiritual rebirth or "being born again"?

## **Seventh Day**

If "being born again" is the same as conversion then when some men are born again they have intense emotional experiences and some do not.

What is the cause of this difference?

Is the experience more real when there is a deep emotion connected with it?

Is it more valuable?

If a man has never had any conscious emotional experience of being "born again" what would be the evidence that he is born again?

What is the evidence that you were ever born physically?

Revise this definition: "Being born again" is the experience a man has when Christ's spirit begins to rule in his life because he decides to "follow Jesus."

Does your own religious life consist of certain beliefs and practices or is it a vital spiritual experience which you can describe honestly, as Paul did, as "Christ is living in me"?

Go to some friend who lives a happy and successful Christian life and discuss with him the questions of this lesson and report results.

Read "Twice Born Men" by Beegbie.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What do you think actually happens when men have the experience commonly known as being converted?

Do all Christians have it?

2. Is God's part in a man becoming a Christian an act, a new attitude, a new relation, or it is all or none of these?

3. What are the tests by which we may know whether or not a man has been "born again"?

4. What change, if any, would come in the program of your Church if every member of it were conscious of being "born again"?

5. When a man decides to become a Christian does God do anything for the man which he had not been doing before? If so, what?

## LESSON XII.

### TWICE BORN MEN (Continued)

Being born does not insure health or growth. In general Christians are more successful at being born again than they are at growing into full stature. How do some Christians keep on being born anew, having increasingly vivid and valuable religious experiences? A man should be a much larger Christian after twenty years' experience than when he was first born again. But this growth requires very definite conditions and processes. What are they?

#### First Day

Read John 14:21-24.

What did Jesus give as the path to this experience?

How could a man increase his love for Christ?

What to you is the best evidence that a man loves God?

What is the best evidence that any one person loves another?

#### Second Day

Read John 14:21-24 again.

Write out what you consider to be the chief "commands" which Jesus gave His followers.

Could a man come into this spiritual relationship with God if he faithfully tried to obey these commands but was intellectually confused about some teachings of the Christian creeds?

How far do you agree with Tennyson that—

“There lives more faith in honest doubt  
Believe me than in half the creeds.”

Could a person grow into this vital spiritual relationship if he accepted the creeds but did not "love his neighbor as himself" as a life program?

Why?

### Third Day

Read John 21:15-17.

Suppose a man truly loved Christ and had this experience of vital fellowship with him but failed to "feed his sheep" what effect would that have on his spiritual experience?

What is the relation between this relation with God and unselfish service for those in need?

The owner of a large department store has a system by which he personally sees to it that the families of his employees are able to live happily and effectively.

Exactly what effect if any should that have in his own religious experience?

### Fourth Day

Read John 15:1-16.

Write out in your own words the teaching here as to the relation between a Christian and God.

What does a vine do for its branches?

What do branches do for a vine?

Define the term "bearing fruit" as Jesus used it here.

Give an illustration.

What are the conditions of "bearing fruit"?

Write out what effect fruit bearing has on our relation to God.

Do you know any school teacher or business man who, in his daily work, is "bearing fruit" in the sense Jesus meant here?

## **Fifth Day**

Read I Cor. 2:9-16.

Paul says his experience with God did not come through his senses or through reason; how then did he come into this experience?

In ordinary language just what does it mean that knowledge of God comes by spiritual impressions?

Have you had any such experience?

Keep a record this week of what seems to you to be spiritual impressions.

## **Sixth Day**

Paraphrase Eph. 3:14-21.

What new evidence do you find here as to the path to comradeship with God?

Who is your best friend?

Why?

What would be the best way to deepen that friendship?

What would mar it most?

Do these laws of human friendship apply in our relation to God?

It is difficult to put into human language the relation of a man's life to a spiritual God.

Does difficulty of expression cast suspicion on the reality of the experience?

How do you differ with the authors of the following quotations:

“Tis strange that God should wish to frame  
And lift this earth sae h’ie  
And clean forget to explain the same  
To a gentleman like me.”

“We can know God easily so long as we do not feel it necessary to define Him.”

### Seventh Day

Read John 7:17 and Matthew 5:3, 8, 9, and 10.

There are three interwoven paths to God,—reason, emotion, and will.

Are they dependent on each other?

For instance, can a man love Christ without being able to reason out a satisfying belief in Him?

Can a man understand Christ who does not love Him?

Can a man love Christ without obeying Him?

If a man comes into conscious fellowship with God by any one of these paths, what effect will that have on the other paths?

For instance, if by the obedience of a surrendered will he comes into this fellowship, what effect would that have on his intellectual estimate of the superhuman nature of Christianity?

Talk with some friend who has difficulty to believe in the superhuman, about this spiritual relation to God and see if you can help him make the next step into such a relationship.

Read “The Character of Jesus,” by Bushnell.

## PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the laws of developing human friendship and how do they apply to our friendship with God?
2. What change is needed in a Christian's life who gladly accepts the Apostles Creed but objects to sitting with a "Dago" in church or in school?
3. What change, if any, has this lesson made in your own idea of just how a Christian maintains and increases the vitality and richness of his spiritual experience?
4. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions in section two of this lesson.
5. What are the conditions of deepening and enriching our experience with God?

## LESSON XIII.

### A WORLD CHRISTIAN

Does becoming a Christian make a man a citizen of the whole world? Is he thereby less a patriot? *The* problem of this generation is the problem of the dovetailing of the nations. Speed of transportation has made the world so small that it is now a neighborhood. But forcing folks into one community does not make them neighbors. The world is not more peaceable than it was when oceans separated far countries. Civilization has nearly failed before this problem. Can Christianity solve it? Is the love of all men everywhere one normal result of becoming a Christian? If it is not, should it be? What change in the conception of the nature of a Christian and of the program of the church would enable Christianity to make of the world one harmonious family of all the Children of God?

#### First Day

Read John 3:16.

Do you suppose that God really loves the world?

There are some very unlovely people in Turkey.

Are you prepared to believe that He really loves them all?

What do you mean by saying He loves them all?

Does it mean He pities them all?

Does it mean that He has a happy life program for *all* of them?

If a Christian father has five children, all with different temperaments and all with different degrees of loveliness, does He love them all equally?



## Second Day

Read Matthew 6:9-10.

“When you pray say, ‘Our Father’.”

How would you revise these rules for a good family?

- (a) There are no favorite children. All are treated alike.
- (b) All share equally the privileges and inheritance of the home.
- (c) Any backward, unfortunate or sick members are graciously and liberally served according to their need by the other members.

Apply these principles of family life concretely to the family of “all men everywhere.”

For instance, if one child has a chance to get an education and the other hasn't, what is the mode of procedure?

Suppose one child went away from the old home to live, what difference would that make?

Suppose one lived in Mexico, what then?

Or in Africa?

In practical every day living what does it mean to you if Mr. Chen of Peking is a member of your family, if he has five children and an income of \$8.00 a month?

## Third Day

In this family of all men everywhere, if geographical location does not determine responsibility, what does?

Am I not primarily responsible for those nearest me?

Am I primarily responsible for men of my own nation or race?

Am I primarily responsible to serve those who need it most wherever they may be?

## Fourth Day

Read again Matthew 6:9-10.

“Thy Kingdom come on earth.”

Obviously a man cannot pray “May God soon rule the whole earth” but I will rule my own time and money.

Under what conditions can a man pray “Thy rulership come on a hungry earth” and then spend \$50,000 for a residence?

Can a man pray “Thy Kingdom come” and then choose his life work for personal gain and pleasure?

## Fifth Day

Read Matthew 28:19-20.

“Make disciples of all nations.”

Was this last command of Jesus meant for all Christians?

Are you sure about it?

A nationally known manufacturer lives economically on about one-tenth of his income. Nine-tenths he gives to Christian work. Is he obeying this last command?

If he gave one-tenth and kept nine-tenths would he be obeying it?

What is the explanation of the increase of power and enrichment of life which comes to a Church or a life which is missionary in spirit?

## Sixth Day

Do you believe that America should join in a league of nations?

What are the causes of the narrow-mindedness of the average American in regard to world affairs?

What are the special reasons why Americans should be internationally minded?

## Seventh Day

Read Acts 1:8.

“Unto the uttermost parts.”

What are the most common excuses given by men who refuse to support foreign missions?

Write out the chief reasons why a Christian should aggressively promote the foreign mission program of the Church.

Talk with at least three of your friends about having some part in the missionary program of the Church and line them up with some group which is at work on a definite missionary task.

### PROBLEMS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is the cause and what is the cure for racial prejudice?

2. An increasing number of America's finest Christian laymen are deeply interested in foreign missions. What causes are bringing this about and how can the number be most effectively increased?

3. A nationally known manufacturer lives economically on about one-tenth of his income. Nine-tenths he gives to Christian work in many nations. Is he fully obeying Jesus' missionary command? Would he be obeying it if he gave one-tenth and kept nine-tenths? What principle should determine how much he should give away?

4. Compare with other members of the group your answers to the questions in sections three and four of this week's lesson.

5. What changes, if any, has this lesson made in your idea of a Christian's missionary responsibility?

## LESSON XIV.

### REVIEW

How then did Jesus measure a Christian? How does the average Christian need to be changed to come up fully to His measure? But this is not a question of philosophy. Christianity is not being tested by its dogma nor does it spread by accuracy of definition. Are you living the kind of life which if every Christian lived, the world would soon be Christian? And especially are you growing in spiritual experience and in value to your community as a Christian. The world waits in tense anxiety to know whether or not its threatening problems will be solved. The answer will be given only by the permeating of all life with the Christian spirit, broadcasted by the reality and effectiveness of the spiritual experience of Christian men.

Read through the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 to 7.

(The Scripture reading for each day this week is not especially related to the work assigned.)

#### **First Day**

Matthew 5:1-16.

Write out with great care your measure of a Christian.

#### **Second Day**

Matthew 5:17-30.

Give yourself an honest grade as a Christian according to your own measure.

#### **Third Day**

Matthew 5:31-48.

Frame a *Christian* program for your Church.

## **Fourth Day**

Matthew 6:1-15.

Decide the next step in the improvement of your own Christian life and make it.

## **Fifth Day**

Matthew 6:19-34.

Decide what more responsibility you should take in the Church's program in the community and in the world and take it.

## **Sixth Day**

Matthew 7:1-14.

Decide what next step you should take in leading your friends farther along in the Christian life and plan to make that step.

## **Seventh Day**

Matthew 7:15-29.

Definitely covenant with God to devote all your powers to Him through service of men whatever your life work may be.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS

1. The purpose of this course is to help men discover for themselves Jesus' measure of a Christian and to live more fully according to that measure.

2. This purpose will not be achieved by lectures, exhortations, or interesting class hours but by honest thorough study and well directed service. The class hour exists to produce thorough work during the week, not vice versa.

3. The class hour should be devoted to a discussion of the problems stated at the end of each lesson and to reports of progress on the service assigned for the week.

4. The daily studies should be used to find the solution of the problems stated at the end of the lesson.

5. The "Problems for group discussion" at the end of each lesson are suggested as a guide for the leader in the class hour. The whole week's work and the class hour aim directly at securing a clear cut answer to the first and last problems stated each week under this heading.

6. This program for the class hour is suggested

- (a) Review previous lessons, especially the last one.
- (b) Get full reports of progress on service assigned and meet difficulties in connection with this service.
- (c) Test the thoroughness with which the members have followed the daily studies. This is one incentive to better study next week.
- (d) In connection with (c) gather the most essential material out of the week's work for the solution of the problems of the week.

- (e) Discuss thoroughly the problems stated at the end of the lesson. Start this discussion by writing on the board the gist of the answers framed by members in answer to the first problem stated under "Problems for group discussion." This is the heart of the week's study. This item should share with the report on assignment of service most of the time in class hour.
- (f) Discuss and revise, if desired, the service assignment at the end of the lesson and secure agreement of the class to work on it.
- (g) Assign next week's lesson calling attention to the points to be emphasized and assigning special subjects for study and report. It would probably be well to read to the class the introductory paragraph of the next lesson with any personal comments which would increase interest.
- (h) Pray together for success in carrying out the service assigned and in study.

7. Keep the discussion always in the realm of concrete experience rather than abstract dogma. Keep constantly asking for illustrations of principles discussed. Be ready with apt illustrations yourself but do not use them if members of the class will furnish illustrations.

8. Urge students to read the book recommended. At least have every book recommended read and reviewed for the class by some member.

9. Always give members of the group opportunity to bring up difficult questions which were discovered in the week's study but be on guard against spending so much time on second rate or controversial questions that the main theme is lost.

10. It may be desirable to shorten the course by omitting some lessons. It would be better to maintain keen interest for eight weeks than to lose out at the end.

11. A few "donts":

(a) Never "exhort."

(b) Do not let the talkative member or leader monopolize the time.

(c) Never do any thinking for the student which you can get him to do for himself.

(d) Do not run over the hour.

12. Read the following:

Jesus the Master.—*Horne*.

Teaching A Bible Class.—*See*.

First Aid In Leading A Bible Study Group.—*Elliott*.

13. Be a persistent, merciless student of your own successes and failures as a leader. Take time every week to analyze your group, the progress of each member in it and the methods being used.





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